United Nations

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General Assembly

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Sixty-first session
Agenda item 105 (e)
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fourteen members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 30 March 2007 from the Deputy Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Further to the note verbale of 27 February 2007 in which the Government of Nicaragua, through its Permanent Mission to the United Nations, officially put forward its candidacy for membership of the Human Rights Council for the period 2007-2010 at the election to be held during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly in May 2007, I have the honour to attach herewith a document containing Nicaragua's voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could arrange for this document and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Mario H. **Castellón Duarte**
Ambassador
Alternate Representative

07-29124 (E) 050407 090407

Annex to the letter dated 30 March 2007 from the Deputy Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Contributions and commitments made by Nicaragua to the promotion and protection of human rights

1. The promotion and protection of human rights by Nicaragua

The Government of Reconciliation and National Unity of Nicaragua is fully committed to the promotion and effective protection of all human rights, in a framework of cooperation and international solidarity.

Nicaragua, as a founding Member of the United Nations loyal to the principles of the Organization, has drawn on its own national experience to help to achieve the important goals of the United Nations, particularly as regards the strengthening of international peace and security and the encouragement of development, while striving at all times to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

With the establishment of the Human Rights Council, Nicaragua wishes to participate and contribute actively to the work of this body, in order to guarantee everyone the full enjoyment of all human rights, both civil, political, economic, social and cultural, including the right to development.

2. Contributions made by Nicaragua to the promotion and protection of human rights at the national and international levels

Contributions at the national level

Nicaragua, in recognizing, promoting and respecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Nicaraguans, has made progress in the legal and administrative sphere, and has developed institutions guaranteeing the enforcement of national and international human rights standards, with emphasis on the most vulnerable sectors such as children and adolescents, women, indigenous peoples, disabled people and migrants.

It has established the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, which is a state body responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights, whose subdivisions include the offices of the Special Procurator for Children and Adolescents; the Special Procurator for Women; the Special Procurator for Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Communities; the Special Procurator for Disabled People and the Special Procurator for Persons Deprived of Their Liberty and Civic Participation.

Other institutions established at the national level to promote and guarantee the implementation of the rights of children and adolescents, together with the family, society in general and the State, include the National Council for the Comprehensive Care of Children and Adolescents (CONAPINA), and a Childhood and Adolescence Code has been enacted.

The Nicaraguan Women's Institute is the government body responsible for implementing plans for the development and protection of women's rights.

Significant progress has also been made in enacting legislation for the protection of indigenous people and people of African descent; such legislation

includes the Statute of Autonomy for the Autonomous Regions of the Atlantic Coast and the Act governing the Communally Owned Property of the Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Communities of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.

Concerning judicial protection and access to justice, Nicaragua has made significant efforts to move towards establishing legislative and administrative standards for the protection of human rights; these include the modernization of the judicial system, notably through the establishment of the Office of the Public Defender, which defends on behalf of the State those persons who cannot afford to pay for their own defence. In addition, the Attorney General's Office has been separated from the Public Prosecutor's Office, in order to separate the administration of the interests of the State and those of society, or the direct victims.

Contributions at the international level

As part of its contribution to the international systems for the promotion and protection of human rights, Nicaragua has in recent years complied with the principal international human rights instruments by signing, acceding to or ratifying international legal instruments such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Children in Armed Conflict, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

3. Commitments made by Nicaragua to the promotion and protection of human rights at the national and international levels

The Government of Reconciliation and National Unity has made combating poverty and extreme poverty the basic pillar of its platform, in accordance with the millennium development goals and with the International Bill of Human Rights. Action to combat poverty and extreme poverty is based on several approaches which include combating hunger, introducing free public education and health care and promoting employment for all Nicaraguans.

Commitments at the national level

Fundamental rights of all Nicaraguans: The Government of Nicaragua is committed to promoting, protecting and strengthening the human rights of the Nicaraguan people by improving their living conditions. To that end, the rights designed to meet the demands of the Nicaraguan people and cover the most urgent basic services, such as free education and health care, clean drinking water and sanitation, food, housing and employment, are fundamental and cross-cutting themes of the policies and programmes conducted by the Government of Reconciliation and National Unity.

Peace and the right to development: The Government believes that reconciliation is a fundamental means of achieving development and combating poverty, and thus advocates for a culture of peace which fosters respect for and promotion of all freedoms (religion, expression, information, organization, etc.) and the rights of all citizens; this will make it possible to

create favourable conditions for investment in human resources to lead to sustainable development.

Respect for the human rights of indigenous peoples: Nicaraguans fully recognize that they belong to a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual nation. Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance are scourges that violate the human rights and fundamental freedoms of our nations and we are committed to eradicating them. Our country commits itself to using the law to preserve, promote and protect the culture of indigenous peoples and ethnic communities.

Women's rights: Respect for and promotion of the rights of women is a key element of the Government's programme. The Government is a staunch promoter of the human rights and gender equity of Nicaraguan women, in rural and urban areas, and in all their roles. One of the measures designed to reach that goal is the promotion of a 50 per cent quota for women in posts in all national and local government institutions and organizations.

Young people's rights: Through a series of projects and programmes, Nicaragua will vigorously promote the rights of young people with regard to education and access to university loans, employment, a healthy life, sport, art and culture. The Youth Institute has been established for this purpose; its main objective is to encourage and promote plans and programmes aimed at involving young people in activities designed to help them become well-rounded individuals.

Civic rights and action to combat corruption: The Government of Nicaragua advocates for direct democracy in the form of civic power, in which the people participate in the elaboration of local and national budgets and exercise budget oversight, and have primary responsibility for implementation of social programmes, ongoing monitoring of costs, quality of work and resources applied, and assessment of the performance of public servants. To this end, we shall promote decision-making by the people, who shall approve, through "civic assemblies", all processes, both national and local, and all economic, social and cultural policies. This indispensable approach will also be the most direct and effective way of combating the scourge of corruption, which is one of the Government's priority goals.

The rights of all countries throughout the world: The Government of Nicaragua will promote and establish the best and most respectful relations with all peoples and Governments throughout the world, through political, cultural and commercial exchanges in all areas of activity.

Commitments at the international level

Nicaragua is a State party to the major international human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Optional Protocol to the

Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

In 2007, Nicaragua will be submitting reports under various human rights treaties after a hiatus of more than a decade. Nicaragua's commitment goes beyond the submission of reports; the Government expects to follow up any observations and/or comments which may arise following the submission and evaluation of such reports. In this way, Nicaragua will comply with the ultimate goal of developing public policies that foster the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

Nicaragua has also established an Inter-agency Committee on Human Rights (CIDH) aimed at guaranteeing participation by all sectors involved in implementing the provisions of the human rights treaties. The establishment of the Committee has facilitated the process of consulting the various Government and civil society sources and processing the information obtained. It will result in reports that are based on national consensus.

Nicaragua pledges to cooperate with the Human Rights Council in order to strengthen its laudable work of protecting and promoting human rights:

By promoting and participating actively in the work of the Council, in a spirit of cooperation, inclusion and authentic dialogue on thematic aspects related to human rights;

By guaranteeing an effective response to human rights violations, wherever they occur, and by contributing to the Council's normative work;

By working jointly with the entire membership of the Human Rights Council in order to ensure that all fundamental rights, particularly the rights of minorities, are respected;

By supporting the work of United Nations bodies, in particular that of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Nicaragua reaffirms its open invitation to all the special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

It maintains its offer to be one of the first countries to be reviewed by the Human Rights Council under the universal periodic review mechanism, in a spirit of cooperation and constructive dialogue, and pledges to implement any recommendations that body may make.

It pledges to support and cooperate in the adoption of new international human rights instruments wherever gaps in the protection and promotion of human rights exist.

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General Assembly

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Sixty-first session
Agenda items 60, 65, 67 and 111

Social development

Elimination of racism and racial discrimination

Promotion and protection of human rights

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Letter dated 30 March 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letter dated 26 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which was circulated as a document of the General Assembly (A/61/769), it should hardly be necessary to point out that fundamental human rights are guaranteed under the Japanese Constitution and that the charges made in the letter are therefore groundless. I would like to express regret that such allegations should once again have been circulated against Japan and to offer the following response.

The Government of Japan has taken what it regards as the necessary and appropriate steps to enable Korean residents in Japan to lead stable lives, including granting them the appropriate legal status to stay in Japan and improving conditions that affect their lives. At the same time, Japanese investigative authorities respond on the basis of solid evidence when illegal acts are committed, regardless of the nationality of those committing them, in strict conformity with the laws and regulations of the country. The measures taken with regard to the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, referred to in the letter, were likewise conducted in a just and fair manner, in strict conformity with the relevant laws and regulations. There is therefore no basis for the claims made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of an "intensification of suppression" of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan or of Korean residents generally.

Regarding the allegation that "Japanese authorities" arranged for the media to issue false reports, in an open and democratic society where freedom of expression and freedom of the press are fully guaranteed along with other freedoms, it is impossible for the Japanese Government to control media coverage of any subject, and it is therefore clear that it made no such effort in this instance.

07-29367 (E) 040407

With regard to Japan's efforts on the reform of the Security Council, its position and aspirations are well known through a number of statements made in the United Nations and elsewhere, and it will continue to make positive and constructive contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 60, 65, 67 and 111.

(*Signed*) Kenzo **Oshima**
Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

United Nations A/61/832

General Assembly

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2 April 2007

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Sixty-first session
Agenda item 128

Administration of justice at the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Diego **Simancas** (Mexico)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 13 September 2006, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-first session the item entitled "Administration of justice at the United Nations" and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee for its consideration and to the Sixth Committee for the purpose of considering the legal aspects, both institutional and procedural, of the matter.

2. The Fifth Committee considered the item at its 43rd, 44th and 45th meetings, on 22, 29 and 30 March 2007. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/61/SR.43-45).

3. For its consideration of the items, the Committee had before it the following documents:

Report of the Secretary-General on the administration of justice in the Secretariat (A/59/883)

Reports of the Secretary-General concerning the administration of justice in the Secretariat: outcome of the work of the Joint Appeals Board and statistics on the disposition of cases and the work of the Panel of Counsel (A/60/72 and Corr.1 and A/61/71)

Reports of the Secretary-General concerning the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and cases of criminal behaviour (A/60/315 and A/61/206)

Reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Ombudsman (A/60/376 and A/61/524)

07-29240 (E) 030407

Report of the Secretary-General on the administration of justice in the Secretariat: implementation of resolution 59/283 (A/61/342)

Report of the Redesign Panel on the United Nations system of administration of justice (A/61/205)

Note by the Secretary-General on the report of the Redesign Panel on the United Nations system of administration of justice (A/61/758)

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the administration of justice in the Secretariat (A/60/7/Add.1)

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the report of the Redesign Panel on the United Nations system of administration of justice (A/61/815)

Letter dated 14 October 2005 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/60/10)

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.5/61/L.44

4. At the 45th meeting, on 30 March, the representative of Argentina, coordinator of the informal consultations on the item, introduced, on behalf of the Chairman, a draft resolution entitled "Administration of justice at the United Nations" (A/C.5/61/L.44).

5. At the same meeting, the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division made a statement (see A/C.5/61/SR.45).

6. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/61/L.44 without a vote (see para. 8).

7. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Pakistan (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China), the Russian Federation, Australia (on behalf of Canada, New Zealand and Australia) and Germany (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union) (see A/C.5/61/SR.45).

III. Recommendation of the Fifth Committee

8. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Administration of justice at the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 57/307 of 15 April 2003, 59/266 of 23 December 2004 and 59/283 of 13 April 2005,

Reiterating that a transparent, impartial, independent and effective system of administration of justice is a necessary condition for ensuring fair and just treatment of United Nations staff and is important for the success of human resources reform in the Organization,

Affirming the importance of the United Nations as an exemplary employer,

Stressing the importance of measures to eliminate any conflicts of interest in the administration of justice system,

Recognizing that the current United Nations system of administration of justice is slow, cumbersome, ineffective and lacking in professionalism, and that the current system of administrative review is flawed,

Noting with concern that an overwhelming majority of individuals serving in the system of administration of justice lack legal training or qualifications,

Noting that legal assistance to the management of the Organization is provided by a cadre of professional lawyers,

Emphasizing the importance for the United Nations to have an efficient and effective system of administration of justice so as to ensure that individuals and the Organization are held accountable for their actions in accordance with relevant resolutions and regulations,

Expressing its appreciation for the consensual outcome of the seventh special session of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the administration of justice in the Secretariat: implementation of resolution 59/283,[1] the report of the Redesign Panel on the United Nations system of administration of justice,[2] the note by the Secretary-General thereon[3] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[4] the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Ombudsman,[5] the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the administration of justice in the Secretariat: outcome of the work of the Joint Appeals Board and statistics on the disposition of cases and the work of the

[1] A/61/342.
[2] A/61/205.
[3] A/61/758.
[4] A/61/815.
[5] A/60/376 and A/61/524.

Panel of Counsel,[6] the report of the Secretary-General on the administration of justice in the Secretariat[7] and the related report of the Advisory Committee,[8] the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and in cases of criminal behaviour,[9] and the letter dated 14 October 2005 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee,[10]

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Redesign Panel on the United Nations system of administration of justice[2] and the note by the Secretary-General thereon;[3]

2. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the administration of justice in the Secretariat: implementation of resolution 59/283,[1] the activities of the Ombudsman,[5] the administration of justice in the Secretariat: outcome of the work of the Joint Appeals Board and statistics on the disposition of cases and the work of the Panel of Counsel,[6] the administration of justice in the Secretariat[7] and the practice of the Secretary-General in disciplinary matters and in cases of criminal behaviour,[9] and the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;[11]

3. *Recalls* its decision 61/511 B of 28 March 2007;

New system of administration of justice

4. *Decides* to establish a new, independent, transparent, professionalized, adequately resourced and decentralized system of administration of justice consistent with the relevant rules of international law and the principles of the rule of law and due process to ensure respect for the rights and obligations of staff members and the accountability of managers and staff members alike;

5. *Recognizes* that the introduction of the new system of administration of justice should, inter alia, have a positive impact on staff-management relations and improve the performance of both staff and managers;

6. *Stresses* the importance of increased transparency in decision-making and increased accountability of managers for the system;

7. *Also stresses* the importance of the proper implementation of a sound performance appraisal system as a potential means of avoiding conflict and the need to provide training to improve the conflict-resolution skills of managers;

8. *Reaffirms* staff rule 112.3, which relates to the financial liability of managers;

9. *Stresses* the need for comprehensive training for all participants in the system of administration of justice as well as the dissemination of information among staff members about the system of administration of justice, the remedies available and the rights and obligations of staff members and managers;

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[6] A/60/72 and Corr.1 and A/61/71.
[7] A/59/883.
[8] A/60/7/Add.1.
[9] A/60/315 and A/61/206.
[10] A/C.5/60/10.
[11] A/60/7/Add.1 and A/61/815.

10. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Redesign Panel to abolish the Panels on Discrimination and Other Grievances, whose functions relating to the informal system will be transferred to the Office of the Ombudsman and whose other functions will be transferred to the formal system of administration of justice;

Informal system

11. *Recognizes* that the informal resolution of conflict is a crucial element of the system of administration of justice, and emphasizes that all possible use should be made of the informal system in order to avoid unnecessary litigation;

12. *Decides* to create a single integrated and decentralized Office of the Ombudsman for the United Nations Secretariat, funds and programmes;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to identify three posts for the Office of the Ombudsman for Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi;

14. *Emphasizes* the need for the Ombudsman to encourage staff to seek resolution through the informal system;

15. *Affirms* mediation as an important component of an effective and efficient informal system of administration of justice that should be available to any party to the conflict at any time before a matter proceeds to final judgement;

16. *Decides* to formally establish a Mediation Division located at Headquarters within the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman to provide formal mediation services for the United Nations Secretariat, funds and programmes;

17. *Stresses* that once parties have reached an agreement through mediation they are precluded from litigating claims covered by the agreement and that parties should be able to bring an action in the formal system to enforce the implementation of that agreement;

18. *Emphasizes* the role of the Ombudsman to report on broad systemic issues that it identifies, as well as those that are brought to its attention;

Formal system

19. *Agrees* that the formal system of administration of justice should comprise two tiers, consisting of a first instance, the United Nations Dispute Tribunal, and an appellate instance, the United Nations Appeals Tribunal, rendering binding decisions and ordering appropriate remedies;

20. *Decides* that a decentralized United Nations Dispute Tribunal shall replace existing advisory bodies within the current system of administration of justice, including the Joint Appeals Boards, Joint Disciplinary Committees and other bodies as appropriate;

21. *Emphasizes* the importance of efficiency in the work practices of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal and the United Nations Appeals Tribunal;

22. *Stresses* that the effectiveness of the formal system will depend largely on the legal and judicial expertise, experience, independence and other qualifications of the judges;

23. *Agrees* that legal assistance for staff should continue to be provided, and supports the strengthening of a professional office of staff legal assistance;

24. *Reiterates* the invitation to staff representatives to further explore the possibility of establishing a staff-funded scheme in the Organization that would provide legal advice and support to the staff; staff representatives may consult with the Secretary-General as they deem appropriate;

Management evaluation

25. *Acknowledges* the need to have in place a process for management evaluation that is efficient, effective and impartial;

26. *Reaffirms* the importance of the general principle of exhausting administrative remedies before formal proceedings are instituted;

27. *Endorses* the measures to ensure managerial accountability contained in paragraph 31 of the note by the Secretary-General;[3]

Office of the Administration of Justice

28. *Agrees* to establish the Office of the Administration of Justice, headed by a senior management-level official, which will have overall responsibility for the coordination of the United Nations system of administration of justice;

Transitional measures

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the Joint Appeals Boards, the Joint Disciplinary Committees, the United Nations Administrative Tribunal and other bodies, as appropriate, continue to function until the new system is operational with a view to clearing all cases that are before them;

30. *Urges* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to ensure the proper functioning of the current system of administration of justice prior to the implementation of the new system, including through the implementation of General Assembly resolution 59/283;

31. *Also urges* the Secretary-General to continue the efforts needed to comply with the time limits of the appeals process and to clear the existing backlog of cases at all stages;

Further reports

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on the following issues regarding the establishment of the new system of administration of justice:

(a) An in-depth analysis regarding the scope of persons who might be covered by the new system of administration of justice;

(b) Proposals on the nomination and selection process for the Ombudsmen and judges, taking into account the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as set out in paragraphs 30 and 48 of its report;[4]

(c) Revised terms of reference for the Ombudsman, as appropriate, taking into account the proposed changes and suggested locations;

(d) Detailed proposals for the strengthening of an office of staff legal assistance, including information on practices in the governmental and intergovernmental sectors;

(e) Detailed and objective criteria for determining which peacekeeping operations and special political missions should have elements of the administration of justice system within their post structures;

(f) The outcome of the Staff-Management Coordination Committee working group on disciplinary proceedings, including on the recommendations of the Redesign Panel on peacekeeping operations;

(g) Arrangements for the members of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal whose terms of office are affected by the implementation of the new system;

(h) Proposals for registries for the United Nations Dispute Tribunal and its interim rules;

(i) A proposal for management evaluation, taking into account the recommendations of the Advisory Committee as set out in paragraphs 32 to 40 of its report;[4]

(j) Detailed information on the relationship and cost-sharing arrangements with the funds and programmes and underlying cost parameters, taking into consideration the comments of the Advisory Committee;

(k) A comparison of the cost of the current Joint Appeals Board/Joint Disciplinary Committee/United Nations Administrative Tribunal system and the proposed United Nations Dispute Tribunal/United Nations Appeals Tribunal system;

(l) Resource requirements for the new system of administration of justice;

33. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to consolidate the above-mentioned reports to the extent possible and to submit them to the General Assembly as a matter of priority no later than the early part of the main part of its sixty-second session;

34. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly a report on resources required for the implementation of the present resolution as a matter of priority at the second part of its resumed sixty-first session;

Other issues

35. *Invites* the Sixth Committee to consider the legal aspects of the reports to be submitted by the Secretary-General without prejudice to the role of the Fifth Committee as the Main Committee entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters;

36. *Decides* to continue consideration of this item during its sixty-second session as a matter of priority with the objective of implementing the new system of administration of justice no later than January 2009.

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 108 (e)
Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 29 March 2007 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the joint statement adopted by the participants in the Fourth General Meeting of the United Nations system and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and its associated institutions, which was held at CARICOM headquarters in Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana, on 25 and 26 January 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the Security Council in response to resolution 1631 (2005). I also request that the joint statement be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 108 (e).

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

07-29112 (E) 040407

Annex

Joint statement of the Fourth General Meeting of representatives of the Caribbean Community and the United Nations system

25 and 26 January 2007, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana

1. The Fourth General Meeting of the United Nations system and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat and its associated institutions was convened at the CARICOM Secretariat in Guyana on 25 and 26 January 2007. The United Nations delegation was led by the representative of the Secretary-General, Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The delegation of the Caribbean Community was led by Ambassador Lolita Applewhaite, Deputy Secretary-General. Both heads of delegation co-chaired the plenary sessions of the meeting, which enjoyed wide participation of representatives of CARICOM and its associated institutions, and of representatives of the United Nations system. Edwin Carrington, Secretary-General of CARICOM, participated in the closing session of the meeting.

2. The Deputy Secretary-General of CARICOM made an opening statement. The representative of the United Nations Secretary-General read a message from Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

3. Deputy Secretary-General Applewhaite provided the meeting with a comprehensive update on the region's success thus far towards the construction and implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy with a view to effectively and creatively fulfilling its ultimate mandate of improving the standard of living and quality of life of the peoples of the Caribbean Community through sustainable development. She highlighted the challenges faced in pursuit of this objective, within the context of a global economic environment adversely impacted by globalization and trade liberalization.

4. Detailing the status of implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, she emphasized that the construct and modus operandi of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy reflect the Community's approach to integration as an interdisciplinary exercise, with such issues as poverty reduction, food security, agriculture, environment, information and communication technology, culture, gender, security and governance being treated systematically as cross-cutting themes rather than development objectives in themselves; an integrated approach critical to the sustainable development of the small, vulnerable States of the Caribbean. She expressed appreciation to the United Nations for its continued support to the Community, particularly to Haiti and to Grenada following Hurricane Ivan.

5. The message of the United Nations Secretary-General reiterated the strong commitment of the United Nations system to support CARICOM in its efforts to pursue regional economic and social development and tackle pressing issues such as transnational crime and HIV/AIDS. The United Nations system's ongoing effort to address the special development needs of the region, particularly in the context of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, was underscored.

6. The CARICOM side also shared its thoughts on the development paradigm of the region with regard to economic and social development and governance.

7. The representative of the United Nations Secretary-General identified strengthening the institutional framework of support at both the regional and national levels to advance the development objectives of the Caribbean Community as the fundamental objective of CARICOM-United Nations cooperation. He urged the meeting to adopt a practical and realistic approach towards the development of those priorities identified by the region which could be meaningfully undertaken with United Nations support.

8. The meeting received detailed CARICOM presentations outlining strategic objectives for the coming biennium, covering the following areas:

(a) Implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and development of the framework for the Single Economy;

(b) Institutional development and strengthening of the Community;

(c) Advancing human and social development;

(d) Enhancing the strategic position of CARICOM within the hemispheric and global environment;

(e) Strengthening governance and security within the Community;

(f) Information and communication technology for development;

(g) Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Fourth Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;

(h) Resource mobilization.

9. Bilateral and multilateral consultations among representatives of CARICOM and its associated institutions and United Nations system representatives were held, providing the opportunity for the development and exploration of ongoing and potential areas of cooperation within the framework of the programme priorities identified.

10. The meeting welcomed the major accomplishments of the Community in deepening the process of regional integration, including progress in the implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, and publication by CARICOM of the *Caribbean Trade and Investment Report, 2005*. The meeting also acknowledged progress at the regional and national levels in addressing a range of social challenges including children and youth, population, reproductive health, ageing, migration, and efforts at gender mainstreaming. The need for support to enhance public education, particularly within the context of facilitating implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy and for campaigns promoting control of non-communicable diseases was underscored. The United Nations system reiterated its commitment of continued support for CARICOM efforts in these areas.

11. The meeting acknowledged that much has been accomplished towards deepening the cooperation between CARICOM and the United Nations, and it welcomed the degree of substantive and technical support provided by the United Nations system to the Caribbean Community, including its member States and associated institutions.

12. The meeting took note of the region's agenda for creating decent work for all and in addressing all of the attendant challenges in the area of labour productivity and workers rights, and expressed appreciation for the contribution of the United Nations system in the provision of tangible support towards achieving this agenda.

13. The meeting welcomed the reaffirmation of United Nations support for the strengthening of governance, and for the region's efforts to combat transnational crime, particularly in building the region's capacity to implement legal and political instruments related to the eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons as well as to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Given the ongoing threat to the security of the region posed by narco-trafficking, the meeting took note of CARICOM concern at the recent closure of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the region.

14. The meeting also noted with concern the continuing negative impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on the region but recorded positive developments in the CARICOM-United Nations partnership in this area, resulting in an increased awareness and public education on the disease and action at the level of national and regional strategic planning, and in the exchange of information and provision of technical advice.

15. The United Nations system took particular note of the focus and new emphasis of CARICOM on non-communicable diseases and the regional summit scheduled for later in 2007.

16. Progress through joint efforts to address the full and effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for its further implementation was acknowledged. The meeting stressed the need to move expeditiously to the practical implementation of the Mauritius Strategy at the regional, subregional and national levels. The importance of agricultural development and food security received close attention in CARICOM — United Nations collaboration. In this context, the meeting welcomed progress made in the Jagdeo Initiative, which has the support of several United Nations and CARICOM partners.

17. Support for the strengthening of the Community's resilience through disaster management, preparedness and environmental sustainability was a high priority for follow-up action. Since effective implementation of a comprehensive disaster management strategy is demanding a multidisciplinary approach, the United Nations system reaffirmed its commitment of the widest participation in a collective approach to address this challenge, in collaboration with CARICOM and its associated institutions.

18. CARICOM and the United Nations agreed to jointly pursue the full and effective implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome on the review of progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, since this document accurately reflects the thinking of the international community with respect to international cooperation for development on which the follow-up for collaboration between CARICOM and the United Nations should be based.

19. The contribution of both CARICOM and the United Nations, through MINUSTAH, in bringing a greater degree of political and social stability to Haiti, and the readmission of Haiti to the Councils of the Community was welcomed. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to supporting that country in its efforts to achieve

sustainable economic development and enhanced social and political stability. The United Nations encouraged CARICOM to become a partner in the integrated mission in Haiti.

20. The United Nations received the requests of CARICOM for support in training and capacity-building, ICT development, research, analysis and advisory services to support informed decision-making and policy formulation, as well as public education at national and regional levels. The meeting agreed that this should be an area for active, system-wide follow-up.

21. The meeting concluded that attention be given to the establishment of an appropriate regional programmatic framework for the pursuit of follow-up and coordination of the priority areas for collaboration. It was also agreed that a mechanism for indicating specific areas of cooperation to monitor and measure progress in implementation should be designed and implemented.

22. The meeting recognized the importance of addressing the development challenges facing CARICOM member States, both at the national and regional levels, and of the commitments and agreements entered into by them at the international level. It also recognized that these obligations impose a heavy burden on limited national and regional resources. It was agreed that CARICOM and the United Nations would examine ways in which support could be coherently provided to CARICOM, its member States and associated institutions in meeting these obligations, ensuring national and regional ownership of both process and outcome.

23. It was agreed that the United Nations would host the next meeting in 2008 to evaluate progress made in their cooperation, at a date and venue to be determined.

24. It was also agreed that the report on the meeting would be finalized shortly and circulated to all participants.

United Nations A/61/834–S/2007/183

General Assembly
Security Council

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3 April 2007
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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 13
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 2 April 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

On the instructions of my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical summary of Israeli violations during the month of February 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 13, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

07-29422 (E) 050407 050407

Annex to the identical letters dated 2 April 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

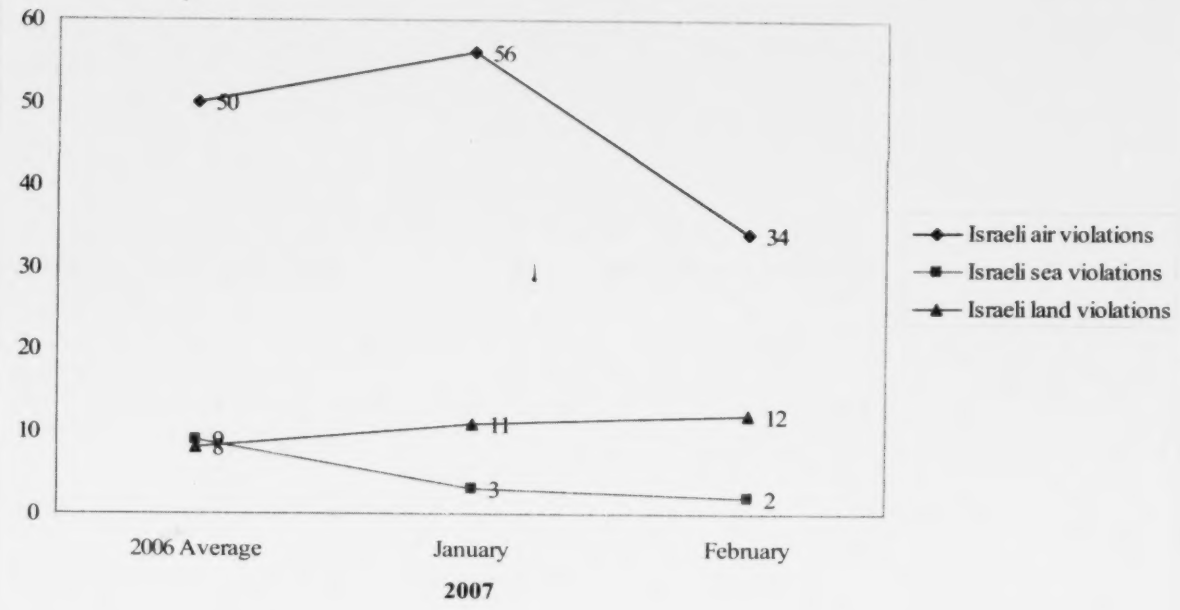
Violations and activities	*Place*	*Date*	*Comments*
Overflight by hostile military and reconnaissance aircraft	The South	1/2	
Firing by enemy forces of four (4) flare bombs in the direction of Lebanese territory	Opposite Marun al-Ra's	3/2	
Firing by enemy forces of several flare shells over the Blue Line, of which two landed inside Lebanese territory	Opposite the towns of Balida and `Aytarun	4/2	
Firing by the enemy of three (3) smoke bombs approximately six (6) metres into Lebanese territory, followed by bursts of fire to detonate explosive devices; then approximately 20 personnel proceeded to search the area	Opposite Marun al-Ra's	5/2	
Overflight by hostile military aircraft	The South		
Overflight by hostile military, helicopter, and reconnaissance aircraft	The South	7/2	
Firing by enemy forces of several flare shells	Opposite Mays al-Jabal, Balida and Rumaysh		
A D9 bulldozer and a trench-digger belonging to the Israeli enemy crossed the Blue Line. Immediately afterwards, an Army patrol proceeded to open fire in their direction. The bulldozer ceased work but the digger continued its work. Enemy forces then fired a LAU missile in the direction of a Lebanese Army vehicle, scoring a direct hit with no casualties resulting. The bulldozer and digger then withdrew in the direction of occupied territory	Opposite Marun al-Ra's		
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	The South	8/2	

Violations and activities	*Place*	*Date*	*Comments*
Shining by enemy forces of searchlights in the direction of the Lebanese Army position at Mays al-Jabal	Mays al-Jabal		
Performance by enemy forces of maintenance on barbed wire strip	Opposite `Aytarun	9/2	
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	The South	10/2	
Abuse directed by an enemy soldier at a Lebanese Army soldier	Fatimah Gate		
Performance by enemy forces of maintenance on barbed wire strip	Opposite Marun al-Ra's	11/2	
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	Most regions of Lebanon		
Performance by enemy forces of maintenance on barbed wire strip	Opposite Marun al-Ra's and the `Abbasiyah area	12/2	
Firing by hostile military launches of several bursts of fire in the direction of a Lebanese fishing vessel, and of a flare bomb in the open sea	Opposite Ra'' al-Naqurah		
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	The South		
Performance by enemy forces of maintenance on barbed wire strip	Opposite Rumaysh	13/2	
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance and helicopter aircraft	The South	14/2	
Performance by enemy forces of technical work on excess water collected inside occupied Palestinian territory so as to allow it to run off into Lebanese territory	Opposite the Kafr Kila-`Adaysah road	15/2	
Overflight by hostile helicopter aircraft	Over the Tall al-Ghabayin and Batishiyah positions	18/2	
Firing by enemy forces of several flare bombs, of which two fell inside Lebanese territory	Opposite Marun al-Ra's		

Violations and activities	*Place*	*Date*	*Comments*
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	The South and the Bekaa	19/2	
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	The South	20/2	
Overflight by hostile military and reconnaissance aircraft, which released heat balloons over the city of al-Nabatiyah and the town of Duwayr	Most areas of Lebanon	21/2	They were met with Army anti-aircraft
Aiming by an Israeli soldier of his rifle while another requested a gunner to disembark from a personnel carrier during an Army patrol in `Adaysah	`Adaysah		
Shining by enemy forces of searchlights in the direction of the outskirts of the towns of Yarun and Bint Jubayl	The outskirts of Yarun and Bint Jubayl		
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	The South	22/2	
While a Lebanese Army foot patrol was moving along the buffer strip a hostile vehicle appeared from the opposite direction. Three personnel disembarked and proceeded to cock their weapons and aim them in the direction of the Army patrol personnel, who in turn cocked their weapons and took up combat positions. This prompted the enemy personnel to take cover in neighbouring groves	Near Fatima gate	23/2	
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	The South	24/2	
Aiming by enemy patrol personnel of their weapons in the direction of a citizen on the border road	The border road	25/2	
Positioning by an enemy patrol of its Hummer jeep and six personnel in combat formation while aiming their weapons in the direction of Lebanese territory	Opposite the road between Kafr Kila and `Adaysah	26/2	
Overflight by hostile reconnaissance aircraft	The South	28/2	

Appendix (1) to the annex to letter no. 123/`*ayn-mim*/inquiry/*sin* dated 19 March 2007

Chart of Israeli air, sea and land violations

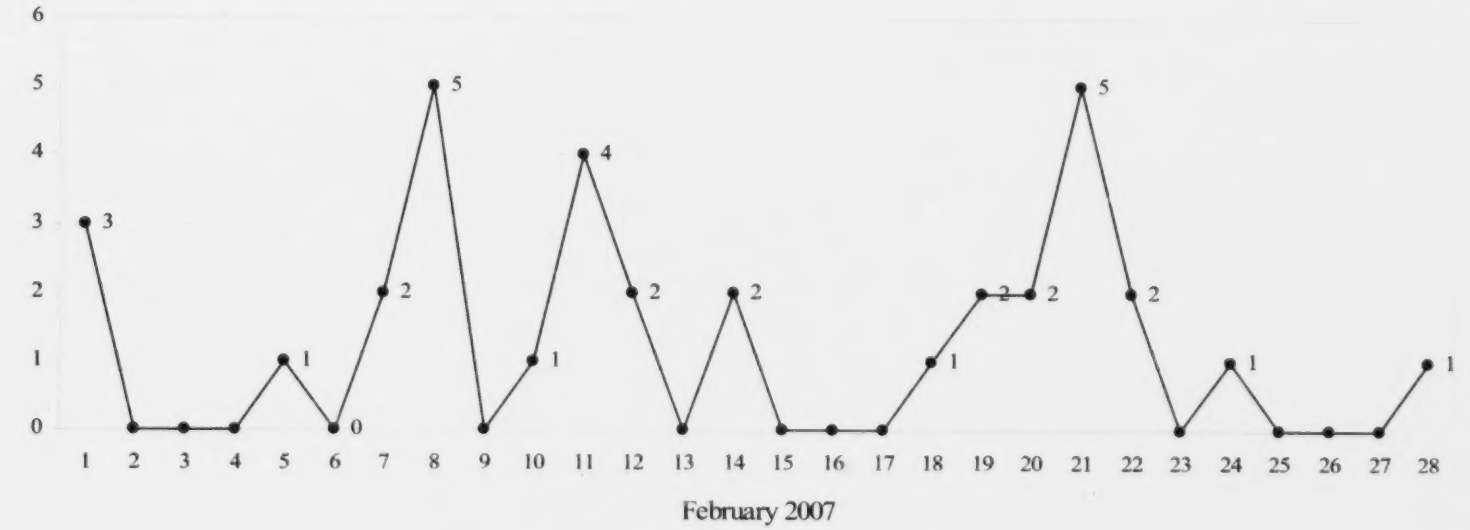


A/61/834
S/2007/183

Appendix (2) to the annex to letter no. 123/`*ayn-mim*/inquiry/*sin* dated 19 March 2007

Chart of daily Israeli air, sea and land violations

Day	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*	*21*	*22*	*23*	*24*	*25*	*26*	*27*	*28*
Israeli air violations	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	5	0	1	4	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	2	5	2	0	1	0	0	0	1



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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda items 76 and 80

Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 31 March 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note verbale dated 30 March 2007, addressed to the British Embassy in Tehran by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, regarding the illegal act of firing shots by the British military forces at the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Basra, Iraq (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 76 and 80, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) M. Javad **Zarif**

07-29416 (E) 040407

Annex to the letter dated 31 March 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the British Embassy in Tehran and has the honour to draw the attention of the latter to the following:

According to the information received from relevant authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on Thursday 9 Farvardin 1386 (29 March 2007) at 10.30 a.m., the British military forces, in four armoured vehicles and with full military equipment, approached the premises of the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Basra, Iraq, and fired shots at the building for more than 10 minutes. The said forces left the area at 11.45 a.m. This was the third time that the British military forces approached the Iranian Consulate General in Basra, and the first time they fired shots at the building, in the course of the past month.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while strongly protesting against this act of the British military forces in Basra, which violates the principles of international law governing diplomatic premises and the mandate of British forces in Iraq, calls for the prevention of the recurrence of such acts and emphasizes that the responsibility for the consequences of any recurrence of such incidents lies with the British Government.

United Nations A/61/836

General Assembly

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Sixty-first session
Agenda item 113
Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In an ever more interdependent world, a coherent and strong United Nations is needed to meet an immense set of global challenges and a wide diversity of needs. The United Nations has a key role in ensuring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and the other internationally agreed development goals, enabling countries to lead their development processes and helping to address such global challenges as disease, conflict and the environment, as well as to promote the realization of all rights. The United Nations must be flexible and coherent enough to respond to the operational and policy needs of developing countries, States experiencing conflict, stable low-income countries, emerging economies and developed countries. It should advocate global standards and norms and, in each country, should be focused on delivering results in line with country needs.

2. However, in the face of the preceding challenges, the United Nations is not optimally configured. The Organization urgently needs more coherence and synergy so it can perform as one and be more than the sum of its parts. It should utilize its unique universality, neutrality and capacity to operate in the security, development and humanitarian spheres. It should more successfully perform its roles of convener, standard-setter, advocate, expert, monitor, coordinator and manager of programmes. It should respond to the diverse needs of countries and perform as one at the country level, and have the governance, management and funding practices in place to support those efforts.

3. The recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment (A/61/583), "Delivering as one", present an

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important opportunity to address those issues in a comprehensive and consistent manner, to ensure that the Organization can respond to the global challenges of the twenty-first century and play a full and effective role at the heart of the multilateral system.

4. Having reviewed and assessed the recommendations put forward by the High-Level Panel, and in the light of the counsel provided by my predecessor, who commissioned the Panel's work, and with the benefit of having engaged in a range of informal consultations on different aspects of the Panel's report, I am pleased to signal my broad support for the principle of a stronger, more coherent United Nations and for the recommendations contained in the report.

5. The Panel's report puts forward a vision of significantly enhanced United Nations system-wide coherence, which I perceive to be very much in line with the demands and objectives of Member States and the concerns they have and continue to voice. That vision is predicated on overcoming fragmentation and bringing together the system's many assets in order to "deliver as one" at all levels, but particularly at the country level, in line with the principle of country ownership. I believe that this is vital, and as I was quoted as saying in the report of the Panel, "the true measure of the success for the United Nations is not how much we promise but how much we deliver for those who need us most".

6. The Panel's vision also gives due prominence to the need for the United Nations system to be results based and focused on performance and accountability. This imperative of efficiency, transparency and accountability is also very much at the heart of the demands from Member States for United Nations reform, and forms a cornerstone of my own priorities for the Organization.

7. The present report provides an overview of how I view the Panel's recommendations in the context of the wider United Nations reform agenda and suggests elements of a process for consideration of ways to take forward intergovernmental consideration of the Panel's report.

II. Consideration of the Panel's recommendations

8. As noted by my predecessor, the Panel's report is very rich in terms of analysis and recommendations and covers a great deal of ground. As he suggested in his transmittal note, the report merits a process of review and dialogue to build broad-based common understanding of its objectives, contents and proposals. Although the main consideration of and decision-making regarding the report's recommendations should be done by the General Assembly, other policymakers and actors need to be brought into the discussion to build deeper understanding and ownership of the proposals. Those steps include consultations within the Economic and Social Council and with the governing bodies of organizations of the United Nations system.

9. I believe that the proposals in the report should be pursued as an integrated and coherent whole, as the report was crafted as such with many of the recommendations connected to one another. Arrangements for its review should ensure that the different proposals in the report are addressed on their own merits, with outcomes that reinforce each other and advance, together, the overall objectives set by the Panel.

10. The report should be considered within the context of a number of ongoing reform processes. Clearly, the Panel, in formulating its recommendations, was mindful of the other processes and the progress and obstacles they have encountered. In that regard, many of its recommendations are consistent with existing mandates for reform. In those cases, the United Nations system should move ahead to improve coherence without unnecessary delays so as to avoid duplication of effort. Other areas will require fuller discussions and deliberations.

11. One such process, which is highly relevant in terms of the Panel's recommendations related to enhancing the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations at the country level, is the forthcoming triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. A number of the Panel's recommendations reaffirm and give renewed impetus to ongoing reform initiatives mandated by the 2001 and 2004 triennial comprehensive policy reviews, which constitute the policy framework agreed at the intergovernmental level for the operational activities of the United Nations system. The 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review provides an important opportunity to consider and take forward relevant recommendations of the Panel, including assessing progress with regard to the pilot "One Country Programmes" recommended by the Panel.

12. Following consultations and at the request of interested Member States, the United Nations Development Group has initiated eight pilots in which the "One United Nations" approach will be tested. The pilots are being undertaken on a voluntary basis under government leadership and will consist of a subset of about 20 joint offices that the Organization has committed to initiate under the triennial comprehensive policy review implementation plan approved by the Economic and Social Council. This exercise will provide an essential test of the application of the principles advocated by the Panel in different countries, and an analysis of the results and experiences will be presented to the relevant governing bodies at the end of the year. I have endorsed the present exercise and encouraged the Chair of the United Nations Development Group to proceed. A number of issues related to the development of the One United Nations approach will need to be considered, including the following: the central concept of national ownership; the authority and accountability of the United Nations Resident Coordinator; and the role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as manager of the resident coordinator system on the one hand and in its programmatic role on the other. There should be clear delineations of responsibilities in the form of an internal "firewall" in UNDP. At the same time, the United Nations Development Programme's programmatic role should be supportive of the overall cohesion effort and be strategic and cross-cutting rather than sector or project focused. There also needs to be more clarity with regard to what would constitute an effective unified budgetary framework at the country level.

13. Similarly, there is an existing process dealing with United Nations reform issues in the area of the environment, namely the General Assembly informal consultative process on the institutional framework for the United Nations environmental activities. The Panel was cognizant of this process and interacted with it, emphasizing that its recommendations were complementary and intended to provide an impetus to deliberations in that forum. Consultations on the environment-related recommendations put forward by the Panel could thus be taken up by the Assembly's informal consultative process, as appropriate, taking into

consideration relevant discussions and decisions in other intergovernmental forums, including the Global Ministerial Environmental Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council, the Council of the Global Environment Facility and the conferences of the parties to relevant multilateral environmental agreements. I will be giving due attention, in the light of the intergovernmental process, to the Panel's recommendation that I commission an independent and authoritative assessment of the current United Nations system of international environmental governance.

14. Progress is already being made with regard to the Panel's recommendation that the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) undertake a review of its functioning, in the light of experience gained since its establishment five years ago, with a view to improving its performance and accountability for system-wide coherence. At the session of the CEB held during the fourth quarter of 2006, executive heads unanimously welcomed the broad thrust of the Panel's recommendations and were united in their desire to improve coherence and coordination and enact the necessary system-wide reforms. The Director-General of the International Labour Organization, Juan Somavia, and the Director-General of the World Trade Organization, Pascal Lamy, have been entrusted with the task of leading the CEB review, seeking the full engagement of all executive heads. The intention is for the first session of the CEB, which I will chair, in April 2007, to consider a preliminary set of proposals for action to strengthen the effectiveness and relevance of that body as a responsive and transparent high-level mechanism under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, geared to advancing the overall coherence and impact of the United Nations system.

15. The Panel's recommendations are providing further impetus to reform measures on United Nations business practices, which are aimed at significantly enhancing performance and delivery of results. The recommendations are clearly very much in line with my priorities in such areas as transparency, accountability, efficiency and human resources development, including the promotion of staff mobility, and should be actively pursued in all relevant forums. Modernizing and achieving full compatibility on processes for resource planning, human resources, common services and evaluation are essential to turning the concepts of a more unified and coherent United Nations into reality. As much of the work falls within the purview of the CEB High Level Committee on Management, which encompasses representatives of all the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, a comprehensive progress report from CEB on its work in harmonizing business practices may be helpful to the General Assembly in facilitating its consideration of these matters.

16. Another area in which progress is already being made is with regard to certain recommendations in the humanitarian assistance section of the Panel's report. With respect to food security, advanced discussions among the Rome-based agencies of the United Nations system have already taken place, with a view to developing proposals for the consideration of relevant intergovernmental bodies. However, more needs to be done to further strengthen the Organization's role as a coordinator in terms of enhancing partnerships and its capacities to deal with the transition phase from relief to development. Moreover, more investment is urgently required in risk reduction and early warning, building on existing international initiatives to help mitigate or prevent natural disasters. The Panel makes good recommendations in those and other areas that should be further considered.

17. With regard to the Panel's recommendations to strengthen the Organization's gender architecture, I am in full agreement with the Panel's assessment of the need to consolidate and strengthen several current structures in a dynamic United Nations entity focused on gender equality and women's empowerment, which should mobilize forces of change at the global level and inspire enhanced results at the country level. It is also essential to stress that gender equality will remain the mandate of all United Nations entities. I will also continue to recruit competent women to become part of my senior team.

18. With regard to the proposal on gender equality and women's empowerment, including the establishment of an Under-Secretary-General for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, who would lead a consolidated and strengthened United Nations gender architecture subject to approval by the relevant intergovernmental process, the United Nations system and many Member States are united in their conviction that the recommendations would contribute to overall efforts to achieve the goals of gender equality and empowerment of women. However, I will await the outcome of the substantive discussions and consultations by Member States on the proposal in order to be guided further by the intergovernmental process. I hope that Member States will be able to reach a positive early agreement on this proposal so that we can take it forward.

19. With regard to the Panel's recommendations in the area of human rights, I am in full agreement with the Panel that human rights and other cross-cutting issues should be an integral part of United Nations activities. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as the highest official of the United Nations responsible for human rights, should ensure the linkages between the normative work of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and operational activities. It is of utmost importance to support the Human Rights Council to make it into a truly effective body that has the credibility and authority to take forward the Human Rights agenda of the United Nations.

20. One area of the Panel's report which merits in-depth intergovernmental consideration is that of governance. I urge Member States to give due consideration to the recommendations of the Panel in that regard. In the view of the Panel, their recommendations taken together would encompass a framework for a unified and coherent United Nations structure at the country level, matched by more coherent governance, funding and management arrangements at the centre as well as by consistency and coherence at the regional level. The report's recommendations in this area constitute an important starting point for a process that requires further deliberation and discussion to develop a commonly owned vision that should enhance the coherence and efficiency of the intergovernmental structure and reflect the principle of country ownership. The preceding set of issues includes consideration of the proposals made by the Panel relating to the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council as the authoritative forum to ensure more efficient implementation of our common development agenda; the establishment of a Sustainable Development Board as an inclusive strategic overview and governance framework for the implementation of the "One United Nations" approach at the country level; and ensuring support to the Sustainable Development Board, once it is created, through an inter-agency Development Policy and Operations Group, within the CEB framework. This Group could either replace the United Nations Development Group or be a subgroup of the United Nations Development Group

explicitly given the task of supporting the new Board. I believe that the aim should be greater coherence at the Headquarters level to support coherence in the field.

21. With that in mind, I concur with the Panel's conclusion that more detailed and specific proposals for further streamlining and consolidation would require a more in-depth technical analysis than was feasible in the time frame available to the Panel. I will thus be giving due consideration to the Panel's proposal that I establish an independent task force to further eliminate duplication within the United Nations system, and consolidate United Nations entities, where necessary, building on the foundations of the Panel's work.

22. I intend to work and consult closely with Member States, the President of the General Assembly and the relevant intergovernmental bodies, which will play a critical role in moving the report forward. In that regard, I have asked the Deputy Secretary-General to oversee and support implementation of the system-wide coherence reform agenda. The Deputy Secretary-General will work closely with relevant senior United Nations officials who will be at the disposal of Member States to facilitate discussion in their respective areas of responsibility. The United Nations system is conscious of the need to urgently take steps to enhance overall coherence and effectiveness, but is equally aware of the need to ensure that efforts to act on the Panel's recommendations are guided by and respectful of the intergovernmental consideration of the Panel's report.